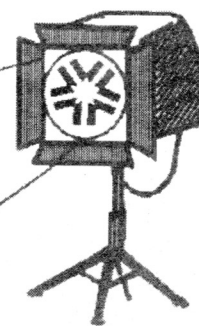


DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA OFFICE ON AGING

# Spotlight On Aging



VOLUME XXI, ISSUE 4

A newsletter for D.C. Seniors

April 2006

## *Celebrating Older Washingtonians and 30 years of the Office on Aging*

### EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE



By E. Veronica Pace

Let there be light! Officially Daylight Saving Time begins April 2. This is the time we set our clocks one hour ahead so that both sunrise and sunset occur at a later hour, producing an additional period of daylight. Also, called "summertime" in various places in the world, its main purpose is to make better use of daylight.

Some studies have shown that Daylight Saving Time also saves energy because of less use of electricity. Whether you agree or disagree, changing the clock, you must do. While you are setting your clocks, it's a good time and idea to also change the batteries in every smoke detector in your house to help keep you safe. A message from the D.C. Fire Marshall appears in this issue.

"Inspire by Example." In observance of National Volunteer Week April 23-29, we have photos of the many volunteers that assist us in our special events. Without their tireless assistance, we would not be able to provide our great events. They help us decorate the Armory, assemble the gift bags, help seniors on and off the buses, help serve the meals and escort those that need assistance to and from the bathrooms. We thank you and honor you during National Volunteer Week. Thanks again!

There are many changes that affect the taxes for District residents. See in this issue information about tax relief programs that might benefit you. If you still have questions when you read the information we have provided, you may stop by one of the walk-in centers listed or call 202-727-4TAX (4829).

Be smart and be safe. Remember to reset your clocks, change your batteries and to file your federal and District taxes on or before April 17, 2006.

Spring has sprung. Enjoy!

**The 42nd  
Annual Senior Citizens' Day**  
Thursday, May 18, 2006  
11 AM to 2 PM • D.C. Armory  
Call 202-724-5626 to reserve  
your free tickets today!

Open Hearts Open Minds

UPO

Foster  
Grandparent  
program

**United  
Planning  
Organization**  
"DC Community Action"

**Make a Difference in  
the Life of a Child....  
BE A FOSTER  
GRANDPARENT**

The United Planning Organization is looking for Men and Women:

- Over 60 years of age
- Can Volunteer 20 hours per week
- Have limited income
- Love Children

Foster Grandparents help children develop the skills, confidence and strength to succeed in life. Working with children in schools, hospitals, day care centers, social service programs and special education facilities, Foster Grandparents give children the much-needed attention that can change lives.

To support your efforts as a Foster Grandparent YOU will receive:

- Pre-service orientation & monthly training
- Daily stipend \$\$\$
- Volunteer service related meals and transportation costs



### SIGN-UP TODAY!

There is a child waiting right now for a Foster Grandparent ...

Contact: Carol Johnson or Gussie Morton (202) 610-0466 or visit our offices at  
1649 Good Hope Road, SE / Washington, DC 20020

## Commission on Aging Seeks Senior Residents

The D.C. Commission on Aging is seeking senior residents to work with the D.C. Commission on Aging and D.C. Mini-Commission on Aging.

The District of Columbia Commission on Aging is a 15-member advisory group to the Mayor, District Council, Office on Aging and the general public on the needs and concerns of older Washingtonians.

In 1975, D.C. Law 1-24, as amended, established both the D.C. Office on Aging and the D.C. Commission on Aging as two independent entities. The Com-

missioners serve as advocates on behalf of the District's 92,000 elderly, and accomplish their responsibilities through outreach to individuals and institutions, as well as to groups and governments.

The D.C. Mini-Commission on Aging is a group of citizens who come together on a regular basis to advocate for seniors. This group also protects the rights, and identifies the needs, of older people in the various wards.

If you are interested in being considered, please call 202-724-5622.



GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

ANTHONY A. WILLIAMS, MAYOR

## D.C. OFFICE ON AGING NEWSLETTER

## Secret Service Investigates Computer Server Attack at Georgetown University Containing Personal Information of Thousands of Area Residents

**WASHINGTON, D.C.** — Georgetown University recently announced that the Secret Service is investigating an attack on a server containing personally identifiable information, such as name, date of birth and Social Security numbers, relating to more than 41,000 individuals who may have received services from the District of Columbia Office on Aging. The intrusion came from outside the University from an individual who did not have permission to access the data.

The computer server was managed by a Georgetown University researcher as part of a grant to manage information on the various services provided through the D.C. Office on Aging. The grant has been active since 1983 providing a service to help the D.C. Office on Aging track services.

On February 24, Georgetown University notified the D.C. Office on Aging of the computer intrusion. At that time, Georgetown reported that its internal investigation had confirmed that a computer server used to provide information to the D.C. Office on Aging had been compromised. As a result the university disconnected the computer server from the Georgetown University computer network. This intrusion was initially detected through a routine in-

ternal monitoring system administered by the Georgetown Information Security Office.

On February 28, the United States Secret Service took custody of the computer server for forensic testing.

At this time, Georgetown has no evidence that personal data have been misused. However, Georgetown is making every reasonable effort to notify all individuals whose personal information may have been exposed on the affected server.

In the meantime, and as a precaution, Georgetown University and the D.C. Office on Aging suggest that individuals who have received services through DCOA programs should consider placing a fraud alert on their credit reporting accounts, which can be done free of charge.

Georgetown University has established a toll free phone number, (866) 740-2458, to provide additional information and answer specific questions from D.C. seniors who may be affected by the recent hacking. More information is also available on this Web site: <http://identity.georgetown.edu>. Georgetown University is fully cooperating with District of Columbia and federal officials on this matter and regrets this criminal attack on this server.

## To obtain credit reports and place fraud alerts

To place an alert, contact one of the three major credit bureaus listed below. It will then notify the other two. Once an alert is placed, any creditor that wants to open a new account in your name is asked to contact you personally by phone before doing so.

The best way to find out if someone else has attempted to open credit card or other accounts in your name is to obtain a copy of your credit report from each of the three major credit bureaus. All U.S. consumers are entitled to one free credit report from each agency every year.

When you obtain your report, look it over carefully. If you notice accounts on your credit report that you did not open or applications for credit ("inquiries") that you did not make, these could be indications that someone else is using your personal information without your permission.

The official Web site for obtaining your free annual credit report is [www.AnnualCreditReport.com](http://www.AnnualCreditReport.com). According to the site, free credit reports requested online are viewable immediately upon authentication of identity. Free credit reports requested by phone or mail will be processed within 15 days of receiving your request.

If you wish to reach the three major credit reporting agencies, contact:

**Equifax**, [www.equifax.com](http://www.equifax.com), P.O. Box 740241, Atlanta, GA 30374-0241. To place a fraud alert: (888) 766-0008. To order a credit report: (800) 685-1111.

**Experian**, [www.experian.com](http://www.experian.com), P.O. Box 2002, Allen, TX 75013-2002. To place a fraud alert or order a credit report: (888) 397-3742.

**Trans Union**, [www.transunion.com](http://www.transunion.com), P.O. Box 6790, Fullerton, CA 92834. To place a fraud alert: (800) 680-7289. To order a credit report: (800) 888-4213.

# Government of the District of Columbia Office of Tax and Revenue

## Tax Relief Programs

District of Columbia taxpayers may be eligible for a variety of Individual Income and Real Property tax-relief programs and credits. Here is a summary:

### Real Property Tax-Relief Programs

**Assessment Cap Credit:** This credit currently provides that a property may not be taxed at more than a 10 percent increase in the property's assessed value each year.

**Homestead Deduction:** If you qualify, the deduction reduces your taxable assessment by \$60,000 (up from \$38,000 in 2005). You must file an application.

**Lower Income Home Ownership Tax Abatement:** Eligible homeowners, including non-profit organizations and shared equity investors, may receive the five-year tax abatement and be exempt from paying recordation and transfer taxes. The five-year period for the Lower Income Home Ownership Tax Abatement begins on October 1, after your deed has been recorded and you have previously applied for the abatement.

**Lower Income, Long-term Homeowners Tax Credit, Schedule L:** This credit was passed by the D.C. Council to ease the effect of rising assessments and taxes on low-income residents who have lived in their homes seven consecutive years or more. Your application must be filed by December 31, 2006.

**Property Tax Deferral:** If you have lived in a Class 1 (residential) property for a year or more, and your tax is more than 10 percent higher than the previous year's tax, you may defer payment on the amount over the 10 percent.

To be eligible for the program, you must file an application and meet the following conditions:

- You must have owned your home for at least one year before the application date;

- You must have occupied the home for the 12-month period immediately before the application date;
- You must currently occupy the property;
- The current year's tax must be more than 10 percent higher than the previous year's tax;

- The total of all taxes deferred, plus annual interest of 8 percent accrued on the deferrals, must not exceed 25 percent of the property's assessment for the real property tax year in which the deferrals are provided.

You must file an application by March 31 to defer the first-half tax or by September 15 to defer the second-half tax.

### Senior Citizen Real Property Tax Relief

#### To qualify:

- You must be age 65 or older
- You must own 50 percent or more of the property or cooperative unit, and live in the property;
- The total adjusted gross income of everyone living in the property or cooperative unit, excluding tenants, must be less than \$100,000 for the prior calendar year.

Note: If a properly completed and approved application is filed from October 1 to March 31, the property will receive the deduction for the entire tax year (and for all tax years in the future). If a properly completed and approved application is filed from April 1 to September 30, the property will receive one-half of the deduction reflected on the second installment (and full deductions for all tax years in the future).

### Individual Income Tax-Relief Programs

**Homeowner and Renter Property Tax Credit:** This credit reduces the D.C. Individual Income Tax liability of eligible homeowners and renters up to \$750. To be eligible for the D.C. Individual Income tax liability credit, your household's total gross income must be \$20,000 or less.

**To apply:** File a Schedule H (Property Tax Credit Form) with your Form D-40 (Individual Income Tax Return).

D.C. and Federal Government Pension and Annuity Income Exclusion:

#### To qualify:

- You must be 62 years or older as of December 31, 2005.
- You must have received your taxable income from military retired pay, pension income, or annuity income from D.C. or federal government during the year. (See your federal Form 1099R)

The maximum exclusion is \$3,000.

**D.C. and Federal Government Pension Survivor Benefits:** If you are an annuitant's survivor and are 62 years or older as of December 31, 2005, the total survivor benefits can be deducted.

**D.C. Low Income Credit:** To qualify for this credit, your federal tax liability before credits and payments must be \$0.

The Government of the District of Columbia's Office of Tax and Revenue offers two walk-in centers. The office can also be reached by phone, fax and via the Internet, as described below.

### Center Locations and Hours

#### Union Square Walk-in Center

941 North Capitol St., N.E., 1st Floor, Washington, D.C. 20002

#### Days/Hours of Operation:

Monday through Friday, 8:15 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

#### Penn Branch Walk-in Center

3220 Pennsylvania Ave., S.E., Washington, D.C. 20020

#### Days/Hours of Operation:

Tuesday and Thursday, 8:15 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

#### Information by Phone:

Customer Service Call Center 202-727-4TAX (4829)

Fax Number: 202-442-6890

#### Information via the Internet:

[www.taxpayerservicecenter.com](http://www.taxpayerservicecenter.com)

## D.C. OFFICE ON AGING NEWSLETTER

# National Volunteer Week

## APRIL 23 - 29, 2006

*The Office on Aging would like to thank its volunteers*



Retired and Senior Volunteer Program



Junior ROTC



Armed Services



PEPCO Volunteers



AmeriCorp Vista Volunteers



Armed Services



AARP

**D.C. OFFICE ON AGING NEWSLETTER**

# Community Calendar

## April events

### 1st, 15th, 29th, & May 6th • noon

Emmaus Services for the Aging will host a free four-week creative writing workshop for seniors. The spring workshop sessions will be held at the Arthur S. Flemming Center at 1426 9th St., N.W. A celebratory reading and reception honoring the writers and showcasing their work will take place on Saturday, May 13 at 2 p.m. at the center. The event is free and open to the public. For more information on how to enroll in the workshop, call Jennifer Smith at 202-745-1200, ext. 423.

### 4th and 27th • 11 a.m.

Come along for the journey down memory lane to find out "What's New in the Old Neighborhood." Participants will visit old local communities that have evolved over time. Join others as they reminisce about the way things were and discover the new additions. An added attraction will be to retrace old streetcar routes. The program will operate out of Project KEEN's Phillip T. Johnson Senior Center at 3200 S St., S.E. For more information, call Robinette Livingston at 202-584-4431.

### 5th • 6 to 7:30 p.m.

Join the second part of the series "Keeping Seniors Engaged at Home," in which professionals will discuss Montessori-based dementia programming targeting seniors. The workshop will focus on helping caregivers familiarize themselves with activity ideas and techniques to use when dealing with people suffering from dementia. Learn how these methods can help you improve the quality of life for your loved ones. It will be at IONA's offices, 4125 Albemarle St., N.W. Call 202-966-1055 for more information.

### 6th • 10:45 a.m.

Emmaus Services for the Aging presents "Caring for your Eyes" as part of its weekly Health Talk lecture series. It will take place at 1426 9th St., N.W. Call Reshima Patterson at 202-745-1200 to make reservations.

### 6th • 11:30 a.m.

Join Washington Seniors Wellness Center as it hosts an intergenerational Easter egg hunt at Hillcrest Recreation Center at 32nd & Camden St., S.E. For more information, contact Vanessa Williams-Harvin at 202-581-9355.

### 6th • 1 to 3 p.m.

Open Public Forum "Maintaining Independence - The role of public transportation as we age," presented by National Capital Chapter of OWL at the Sumner School, 1201 17th St., N.W. For more information, call 202-588-1734.

### 6th • 2:30 to 4:30 p.m.

Join IONA for tea and piano music on the first Thursday of every month. IONA's social tea is sponsored by the Citizen's Advisory Council and is held at IONA's offices, 4125 Albemarle St., N.W. For more information, call 202-966-1055.

### 6th and 20th • 1 to 3 p.m.

On the first and third Thursday of each month, seniors gather to discuss topics of interest at IONA. Subjects vary and often guest presenters are invited to share their experiences. Travel, history, art, music, politics and Washington D.C. are a few of the areas of interest that the group tackles. It meets at IONA, 4125 Albemarle St., N.W. Call 202-895-9448 for more details.

### 7th • 8:45 a.m. to 1:15 p.m.

"Building Collaborative Relationships: Mental Health Consumers, Case Managers, Representative Payees and CRF Providers. Training at the Brickfield Conference Center, D.C. Long Term Care Ombudsman Program, 601 E St. N.W. This training will include informative presentations from the Social Security Administration, the Department of Mental Health and University Legal Services. RSVP by calling Tara Nelson at 202-265-2400 x34.

### 13th and 14th • 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

The United Planning Organization's Project KEEN takes its My Medicare Matters program on the road to help seniors enroll in Medicare Part D. This effort is sponsored by the National Council on Aging. For more information, call 202-388-4280. On the 13th and 14th it will be at the office of D.C. City Council member Vincent C. Gray, 4645 Nanie H. Burroughs Ave., N.E.

### 17th • 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The Dwelling Place Senior Center will be hosting its first annual hat fashion show. This year's theme is "If This Hat Could Talk." Hats will be modeled from Estella's Hats. The event will take place inside the Bailey Room of St. Francis Xavier Church at 2800 Pennsylvania Ave., S.E. Reservations are requested by April 7. Call Denise Stoney at 202-582-7138, ext. 101 to register.

### 20th • 11 a.m.

Honor a group of volunteers. "Thanks to Our Volunteers" will highlight the Dodd-Washington family for their support and dedication to the Project Keen program. It will meet at the Phillip T. Johnson Senior Center, 3200 S St., S.E. For more information, call Robinette Livingston at 202-584-4431.

### 20th and 27th • 10:45 a.m.

Emmaus Services for the Aging presents a two-part series titled "Alcohol Abuse Awareness." The series is

part of the center's weekly Health Talk lecture program. It will take place at 1426 9th St., N.W. Call Reshima Patterson at 202-745-1200 to make reservations.

### 21st • 8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Spend the morning walking and sightseeing along the Tidal Basin followed by lunch at Union Station. The trip is sponsored by Washington Seniors Wellness Center. A bus will depart from and return to Hillcrest Recreation Center, 32nd & Camden St., S.E. To participate, call Vanessa Williams-Harvin at 202-581-9355.

### 21st • 10:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

The United Planning Organization's Project KEEN takes its My Medicare Matters program to Kenilworth Parkside Recreation Center, 4300 Anacostia Ave., N.E. For more information, call 202-388-4280.

### 22nd • 11:30 a.m.

Join the United Planning Organization's Weekend Nutrition Program for a meal at Gladys Knight's chicken and waffles restaurant. The group will meet at 1649 Good Hope Rd., S.E. before heading off to the restaurant in Largo, Md. To reserve a spot, call Evelyn Minor at 202-610-5857.

### 27th • 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Meet with an educator about enrolling in a Medicare prescription drug insurance plan. "My Medicare Matters" is an education program sponsored by the National Council on Aging and the Access to Benefits Coalition. For more information or to register, call IONA Senior Services at 202-966-1055.

### 29th • 12:30 p.m.

Taste cancer-fighting foods along with Evelyn Minor, program nutritionist for United Planning Organization's Weekend Nutrition Program. The program will take place at 1649 Good Hope Rd., S.E. For more information, call 202-610-5857.

## We're looking for Ms. Senior DC 2006

### If you know her,...

make sure she is entered as a contestant in the **Ms. Senior D.C. 2006 Pageant.**

She could represent our city in the **Ms. Senior America Pageant.**

Contact the Ms. Senior D.C. Planning Committee Chairperson, Gwen Coleman, at **202-289-1510 ext. 170/171.**



## Message From the Fire Marshall

### Safe smoking tips

Careless smoking is one of the major causes of death by fire in our country. The cause of these fire deaths is carelessly discarded fire materials.

Whether hot ashes are dumped into the garbage or a cigarette falls onto a bed, carelessly discarded smoking materials kills hundreds of people every year. These types of fires are too common. With a little attention, you can prevent these fires and save lives.

A few safety tips that you can do to safeguard yourself are:

- **Never smoke in bed.**
- **Always use large, oversized ashtrays.**
- **Make certain ashes are cold before dumping ashtrays into the garbage.**
- **Make sure that your home has working smoke alarms. Test them monthly!**

## SPOTLIGHT ON AGING

Spotlight On Aging is published by the Information Office of the D.C. Office on Aging for D.C. senior residents.

Advertising contained in the Senior Beacon is not endorsed by the D.C. Office on Aging or by the publisher.

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The D.C. Office on Aging does not discriminate against anyone based on actual or perceived: race, color, religion, national origin, sex, age, marital status, personal appearance, sexual orientation, familial status, family responsibilities, matriculation, political affiliation, disability, source of income, and place of residence or business.

Sexual harassment is a form of sex discrimination which is prohibited by the Act. In addition, harassment based on any of the above protected categories is prohibited by the Act. Discrimination in violation of the Act will not be tolerated. Violators will be subjected to disciplinary action.

The Office on Aging is in partnership with the District of Columbia Recycling Program.